

# About the Recipients



## Alcorn State University Jazz Festival



For more than four decades, Alcorn State University Jazz Festival has brought some of the most significant jazz performers in the history of the genre to the state, often representing the only occasion many of these musicians perform in the state. Under the direction of Dr. Miller for 35 years, the festival aims to educate students and others through workshops and discussions with artists. It has featured Branford Marsalis, Esperanza Spalding and McCoy Tyner as well as the late Chick Corea, Freddie Hubbard, Max Roach and many others. Held in Vicksburg annually, the nationally recognized Alcorn State University Jazz Festival has inspired generations of student musicians and is always free of charge and open to the public.

## Myrna Colley-Lee



Myrna Colley-Lee, is an internationally known costume designer as well as a philanthropist, arts advocate and patron. Credited as one of the foremost costume designers in the Black Theatre Movement, she started her career in the late 1960s and is an active designer today. She has also served as a costume designer, art director and set designer for film productions. Colley-Lee has received numerous awards, including Outstanding Costume Design from the National Black Theatre Festival, the Mississippi Institute of Arts and Letters Lifetime Achievement Award, among others. A permanent collection of her clothing and costumes is held by the Mississippi State University library. A longtime resident of Charleston, Miss., Colley-Lee serves on the board of the Mississippi Museum of Art, the Charleston Arts Revitalization Effort and was a long-serving commissioner for the Mississippi Arts Commission.

## Larry Gordon



Lawrence "Larry" Gordon has been one of the entertainment industry's most prolific and successful producers in a career spanning six decades. Gordon is best known for producing the timeless drama "Field of Dreams," for which he received a Best Picture Oscar nomination, and the landmark action film "Die Hard." His long list of credits includes "48 Hrs.," "Predator," "Boogie Nights," "Lara Croft: Tomb Raider" and "Point Break." As Senior Vice President of Screen Gems Television, Gordon developed, among others, one of the most-viewed TV movies ever, "Brian's Song." From 1984 to 1986, Gordon served as President of 20th Century Fox. A native of Belzoni, Miss., Gordon maintains his ties to the area and has supported local initiatives.

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## Holly Lange



A leader and patron of the arts community in Mississippi, Holly Lange has showcased Mississippi's rich cultural history far beyond the state's borders by producing significant cultural events, leading museum openings and supporting for arts initiatives. She has led the opening festivities of Mississippi Civil Rights Museum and Museum of Mississippi History, the B.B. King Museum and Delta Interpretive Center and Mississippi Museum of Art Centennial. Notably, Lange is the founder of the Mississippi Book Festival, which attracts thousands of participants each year. A resident of Ridgeland, Miss., Lange serves on numerous philanthropic boards and has received many prestigious awards for community service.

## Mary Lovelace O'Neal



Mary Lovelace O'Neal is a celebrated contemporary abstract artist and arts educator. O'Neal's work in mixed media, painting and printmaking explores personal narratives as well as themes of social justice and contemporary debates. O'Neal has exhibited nationally and internationally, including a recent exhibit at the Mnuchin Gallery in New York City titled "Chasing down the Image." She is a recipient of the Artist En France Award and was selected to represent Mississippi in the Committees Exhibition at the National Museum of Women in the Arts in Washington, D.C. She is Professor Emeritus, University of California, Berkeley. A native of Jackson, Miss., she resides in Oakland, Calif., and maintains a studio in Chile.

## The Williams Brothers



Few gospel groups can equal The Williams Brothers in terms of longevity. Organized in 1960 by their late father Leon "Pop" and late brother Frank Williams, the group now consists of Doug and Melvin Williams, Henry Green and Andre Tate. Nominated for seven GRAMMY Awards, two Dove Awards and one Soul Train Award, the group has won 21 Stellar Awards and have had three #1 albums and 18 Top Ten Albums on Billboard. They have shared the stage with Stevie Wonder, Brandy, Charlie Pride, Jerry Lee Lewis, Patti LaBelle, James Taylor and many others. Central Mississippi natives, the group has performed for Mississippi governors, and in 2015, they performed at the White House with Aretha Franklin for former President Barack Obama.